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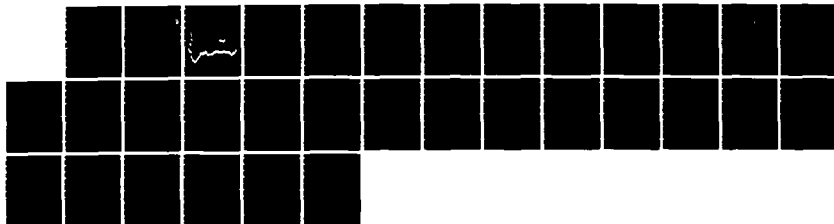
THE ARMY IN SUPPORT OF POLITICAL OBJECTIVES: THE 1963  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC INTERVENTION(U) ARMY CENTER OF  
MILITARY HISTORY WASHINGTON DC L M GREENBERG MAR 87

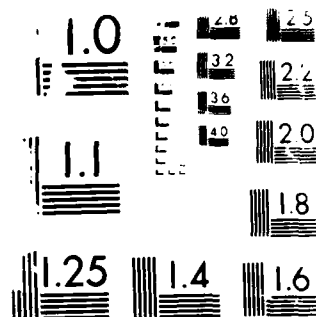
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| <p>Taken from a Center of Military History manuscript entitled <u>United States Army Unilateral and Coalition Operations in the 1965 Dominican Republic Intervention</u> (CMH Pub 93-5, 1987), this paper was presented by the author at the 1987 Missouri Valley History Conference. The paper deals with the American intervention into the Dominican Republic Civil War of 1965. Specifically, it addresses the role played by the 82d Airborne Division in stopping the Dominican Civil War, restoring peace in Santo Domingo, and supporting diplomatic efforts by the US State Department and the Organization of American States. This was the first and only time that the OAS formed a coalition military force (the IAPF) to act within a neighbor nation and, American military forces composed the vast majority of this force. The paper addresses the importance of military flexibility and restraint in dealing with revolution or insurgency in another sovereign nation.</p> |  |   |                                |
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**THE ARMY IN SUPPORT  
OF POLITICAL INITIATIVES:  
THE 1965 DOMINICAN REPUBLIC  
INTERVENTION**



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*by Major Lawrence M. Greenberg*

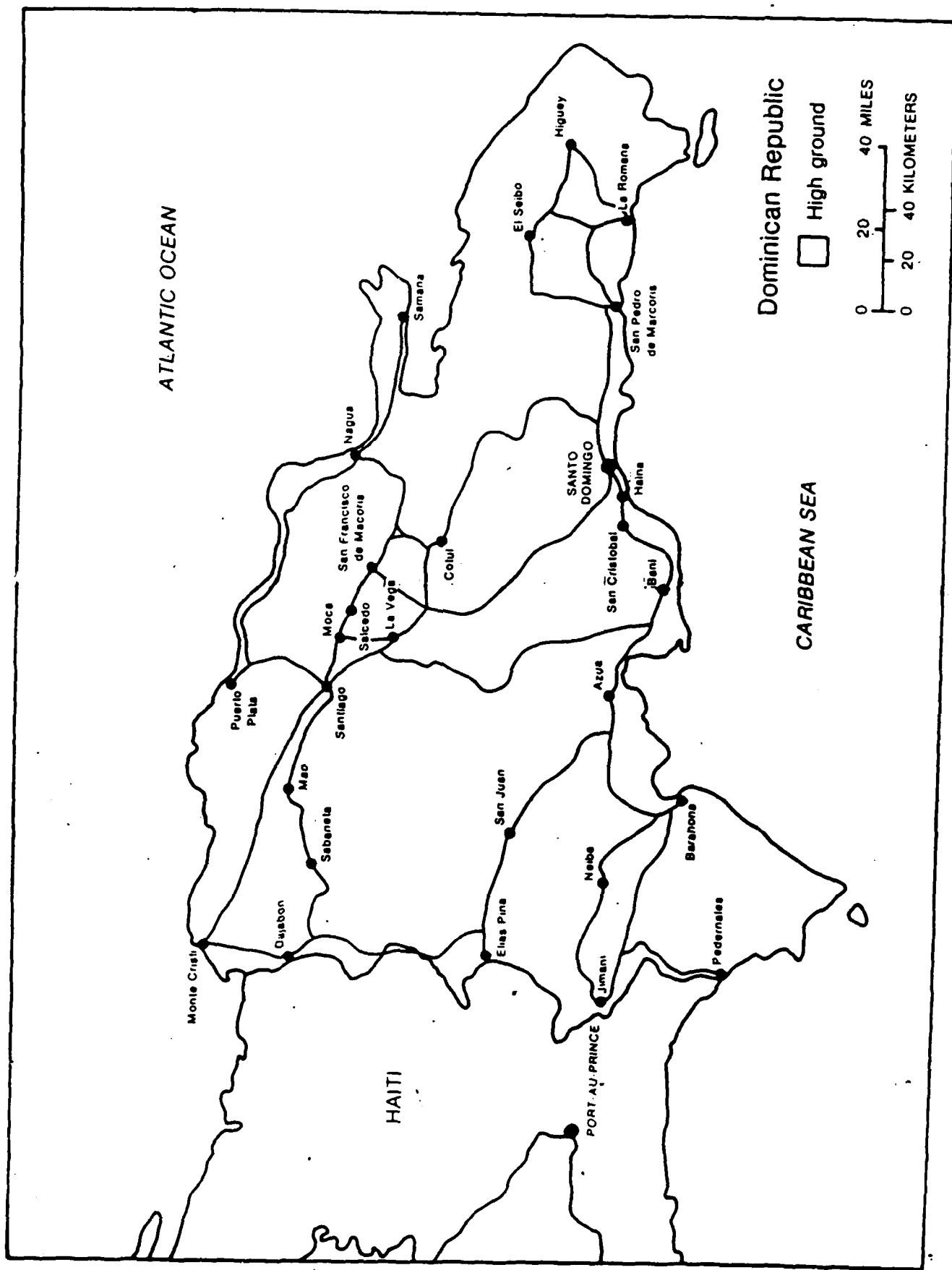
The Army in Support of Political Initiatives:  
The 1965 Dominican Republic Intervention

by  
Major Lawrence M. Greenberg  
U.S. Army Center of Military History

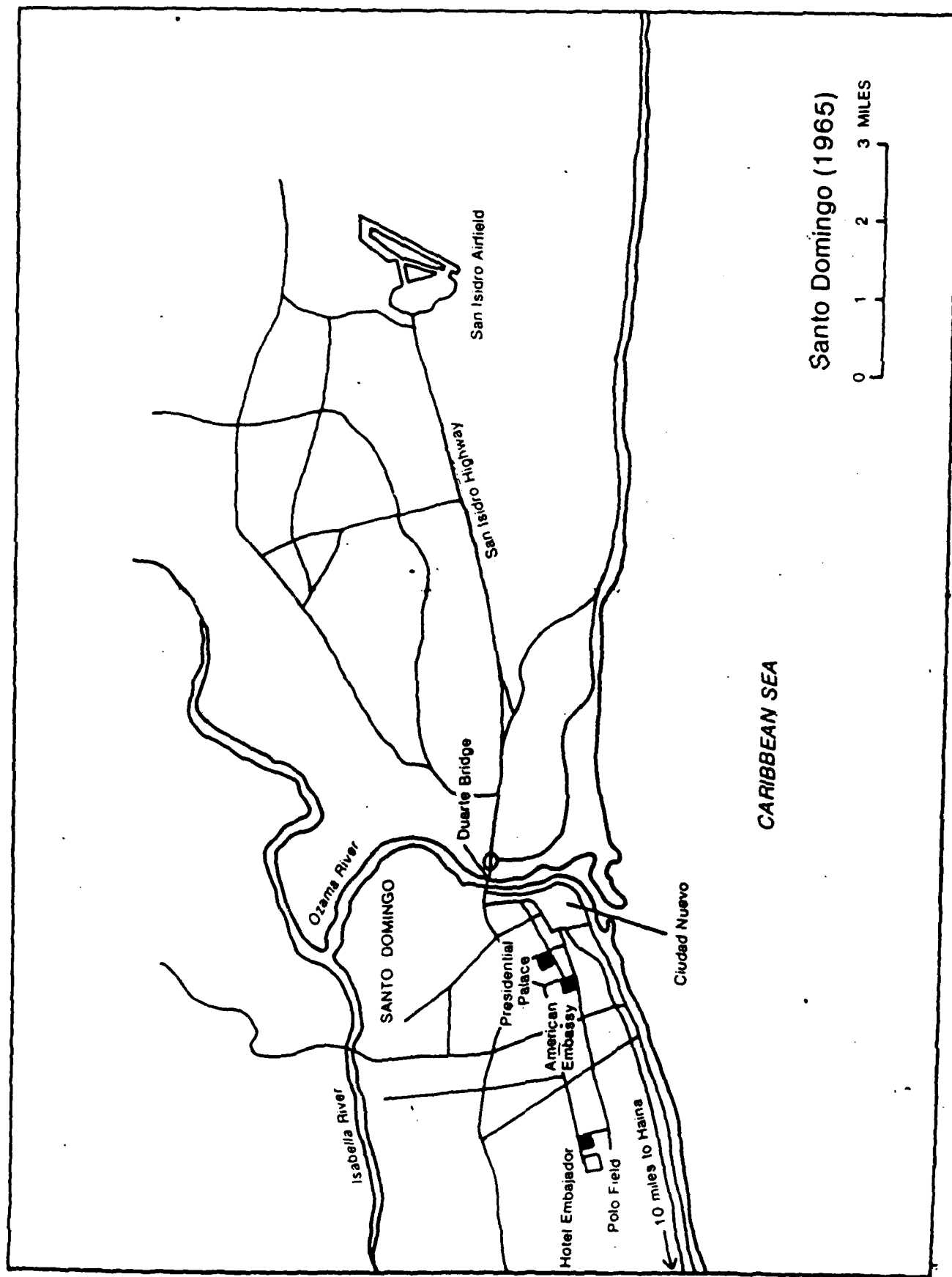
Just before 0200 on 30 April 1965, two battalions of paratroopers from the 3d Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, under the command of Maj. Gen. Robert York, landed at San Isidro Airfield. Ten miles away, the beleaguered capital of Santo Domingo was in the grip of a violent civil war. (Map 3) Six days before, American diplomats and military advisors had been surprised by an unexpected rebellion and had observed the resulting bloodshed with shock and horror.<sup>1</sup> Two Dominican Army battalions, whose officers supported the return of deposed president Juan Bosch, had entered into open revolt against the government and were joined quickly by several well organized Communist and left-wing political parties. Within 24 hours, the two rebel groups consolidated their power and controlled most of the city. Bosch's supporters adopted the name Constitutionlists after the 1963 constitution that was supplanted by the post-Bosch government. The Dominican military and its supporters became known as Loyalists. After considerable delay, the Dominican military decided to fight the rebels under the command of General Elias Wessin y Wessin, a right-wing caudillo closely associated with former dictator Rafael Trujillo.

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<sup>1</sup>On 24 April 1965, when the rebellion erupted, the American ambassador had just returned to the United States to visit his mother and all but two members of the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group had gone to Panama for a routine meeting. Herbert G. Schoonmaker, "U.S. Forces in the Dominican Crisis of 1965," doctoral dissertation (Athens: University of Georgia, 1977), p. 21.



## Map 2



Loyalists made two half-hearted attempts to reassert control, but managed to occupy only two small areas in the city.<sup>2</sup>

The division's arrival in the Dominican Republic displayed President Johnson's resolve to prevent another pro-left regime from taking power in the Caribbean. Dark and inactive just hours before, San Isidro Airfield was transformed into the center of the third armed American intervention in the Dominican Republic in the twentieth century and the first such expedition undertaken by the U.S. Army. As each Air Force C-130 transport arrived, soldiers unloaded weapons and equipment, and established a hasty security perimeter around the airfield. Within the hour, San Isidro became so overcrowded with aircraft arriving from Fort Bragg that pilots were diverted temporarily to Ramey Air Force Base on nearby Puerto Rico.<sup>3</sup>

Thus began the largest and most rapid build-up of U.S. Army forces outside the United States. During the next fourteen days, the Air Force devoted all of its transport aircraft not involved in Southeast Asia to the Dominican Republic. Landing on the average of every five minutes, the Air Force delivered 14,600 soldiers and nearly 30 million pounds of equipment and emergency

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<sup>2</sup>One force from the Armed Forces Training Center at San Isidro secured an area west of the Duarte Bridge, while a battalion from Camp Mella fought its way into western Santo Domingo. Despite these initial gains, the two forces stopped fighting and did not attempt to combine or enlarge their territory. Center for Strategic Studies, Dominican Action--1965: Intervention or Cooperation (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University, Jul 66), p 27; Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Chronology of the Crisis in the Dominican Republic" (Washington, D.C.: Historical Division, Joint Secretariat, 30 Sep 66), p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Staff, "Stability Operations Dominican Republic," pt.2, vol. IV (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 28 Jun 71) p. 93.



supplies to the island in more than 1,500 sorties.<sup>4</sup> But the 1965 intervention did more than test American deployment capabilities. The intervention confronted the commander of U.S. forces in the Dominican Republic with new and delicate problems involving carefully orchestrated military support for diplomatic initiatives.

Three days before the division flew to San Isidro, President Johnson detailed his agenda to General Earl Wheeler, the chairman of the joint chiefs. The president wanted the situation in Santo Domingo brought under control quickly and with no doubt about American intentions to stop the violence. Even while he authorized General Wheeler to use whatever force he needed to stop the fighting, Johnson made it clear that military operations would become secondary to diplomatic considerations once the fighting ceased.<sup>5</sup> From the operation's onset, Johnson envisioned that once the Army brought the civil war under control, its combat mission would be subordinate to State Department initiatives involving the Organization of American States. In this capacity, the military would be used to apply the right amount of pressure on the right players at the right time.

Johnson's plan required an exceptional amount of flexibility and restraint from both the American military commander and from individual soldiers. The proposition that military actions must always support greater political and diplomatic goals was not new but, in 1965, the situation in the Dominican Republic put this theory to the test.

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<sup>4</sup>Department of the Army, "Stability Operations," p. 42; "The Dominican Intervention 1965" (Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: U.S. Army War College, 1984), p. 9.

<sup>5</sup>Speech, General Bruce Palmer, Jr., for AUSA meeting, 11 Oct 66, Washington, D.C., sub: US Stability Operations in the Dominican Republic, in Palmer private papers.

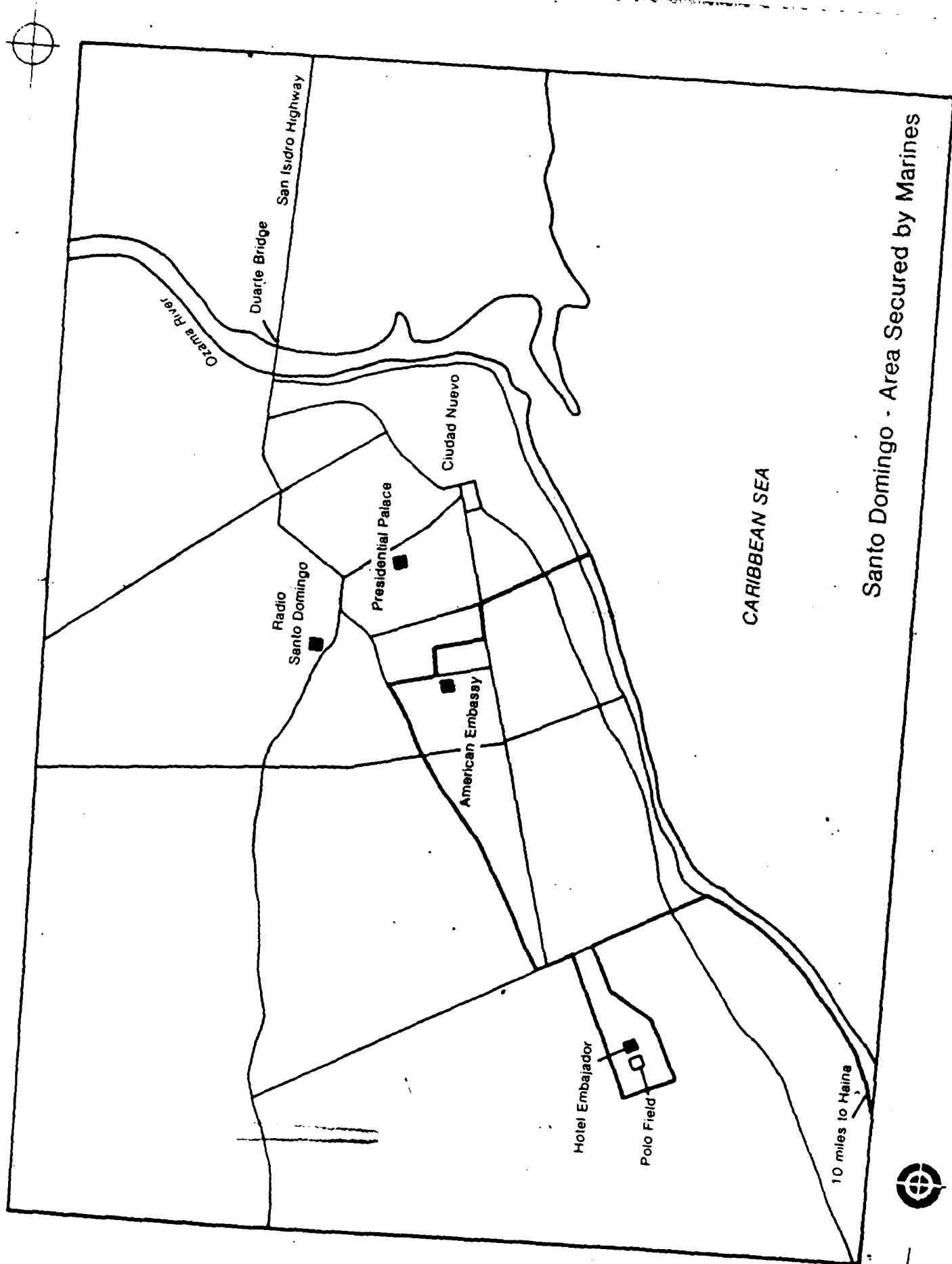
Shortly after arriving on the island in the lead aircraft, General York boarded a Marine helicopter and met off-shore with the American Ambassador, W. Tapley Bennett Jr., and Vice Adm. Kleber S. Masterson, CINCLANT's naval task force commander. Masterson's six-vessel task force was ordered to the area from Puerto Rico on 26 April and already had conducted two evacuations before York's division deployed.

The first evacuation took place on 27 April, the day after the naval task force took station off the island. Following an incident where rebels fired machine guns over the heads of Americans gathered at the Embajador Hotel, the president ordered Marines to begin the evacuation. Unarmed Marines accompanied two ships and several helicopters to the port of Haina where they received the evacuees. (Maps 2, 3) By nightfall, 1,176 civilians, most of them Americans, were lifted safely aboard U.S. Navy warships for transport to Puerto Rico.

The next day, 28 April, another 1,000 civilians were airlifted to ships from a makeshift heliport at the Polo Grounds adjacent to the Embajador Hotel. (Map 4) At 1800, after being informed by the embassy that "collective madness" engulfed the city, President Johnson approved a joint chiefs' proposal to land three Marine battalions (approximately 1,700 men) in Santo Domingo. The armed Marines would be used to reinforce the area surrounding the embassy, to protect remaining American citizens, to bolster sagging Loyalist morale, and to assure American military presence on the island should the 82d Airborne Division be introduced into the foray.\*

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\*Msg, State to Bennett, AMEMBASSY Santo Domingo, 281313Z Apr 65, NSC History; Memo, State Dept, 28 Apr 65, in Bennett personal papers, box 4416 83D358.



Santo Domingo - Area Secured by Marines

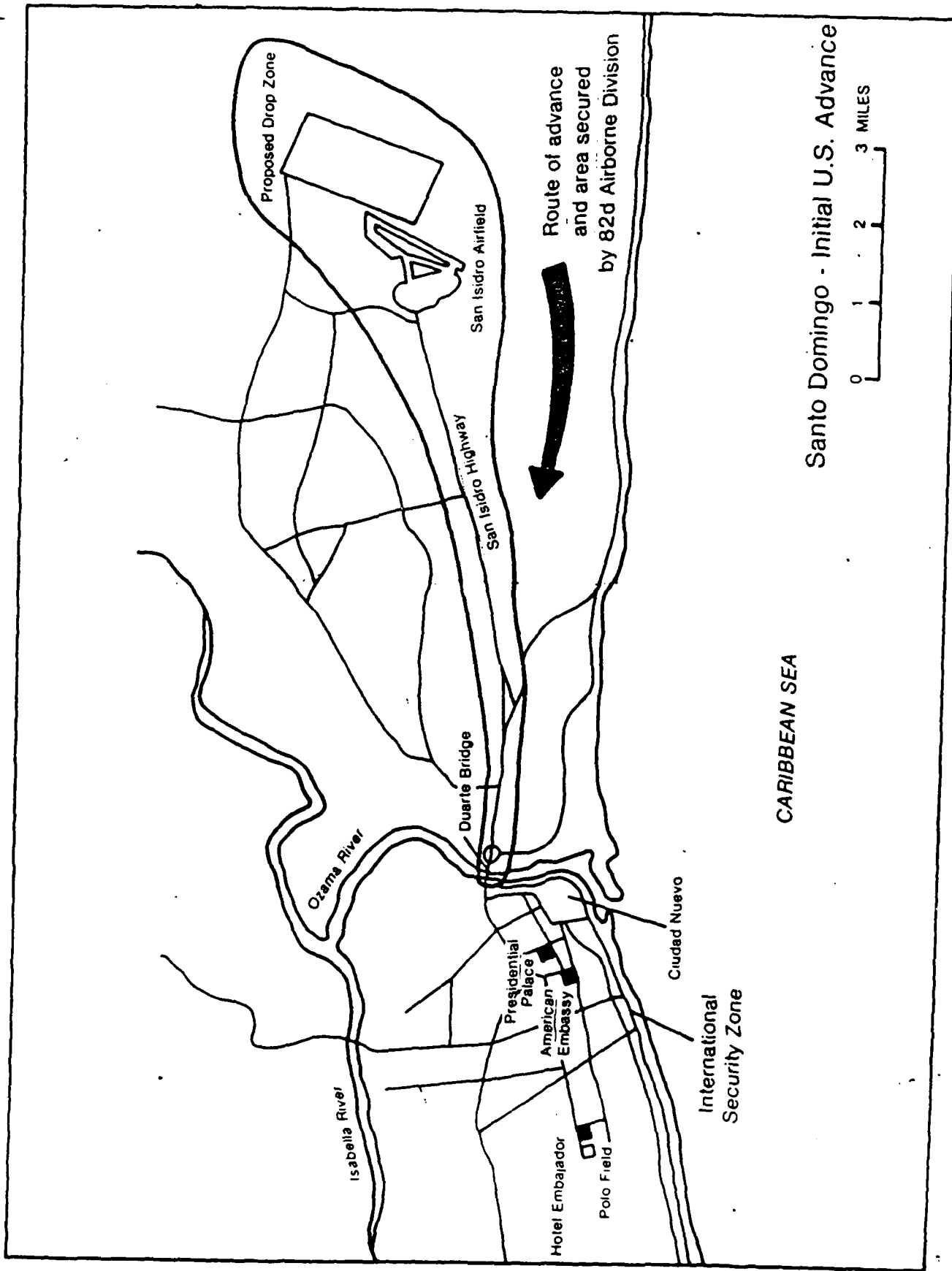
During the pre-dawn hours of 30 April, General York, Ambassador Bennett, and Admiral Masterson began to formulate a scheme to move the paratroopers into the heart of Santo Domingo. Together they developed a simple and straightforward plan-- divide the city by extending a line of American and loyal Dominican army forces from San Isidro Airfield, across the Duarte Bridge, to Marine positions near the embassy.<sup>7</sup> This would provide a continuous line with paratroopers on the east, Loyalists in the center, and Marines on the west in the international security zone, the diplomatic section of Santo Domingo.

At dawn on 30 April, the 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry advanced west toward Santo Domingo and secured the Duarte Bridge, the only route out of the city to the east. Meanwhile, the 1st Battalion, 505th Infantry secured San Isidro as additional troops and equipment arrived from Ft. Bragg. (Map 5) It was during the move to Santo Domingo, when the division was confronted with the first of many unique problems it would face -- how to tell the difference between the Dominican factions. Since both Dominican forces wore identical uniforms, someone needed to find a way to identify who was who. An imaginative young officer suggested that, as a temporary measure, Loyalists could wear their hats sideways or backwards. As unlikely a solution as this appeared, it worked.<sup>8</sup> Daybreak also showed local commanders how fortuitous the eleventh-hour change of plan from airdrop to air land had been. Reconnaissance patrols reported that the division's planned landing zone was covered with sharp coral outcroppings that would have inflicted heavy casualties to paratroopers. Although the entire operation was based on an

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<sup>7</sup>R. McC. Tompkins, "Ubique," USMC Gazette 49 (Sep 65): 34.

<sup>8</sup>Eldredge R. Long, Jr., "The Dominican Crisis 1965: An Experiment in International Peace Keeping," student thesis (Newport, R.I.: U.S. Naval War College, 1967), p. 39.



Santo Domingo - Initial U.S. Advance

0 1 2 3 MILES



approved contingency plan, CINCLANT OPLAN 310/2, no one from the American military advisory group had conducted an on-the-ground survey of this key area.<sup>9</sup>

Once York's men secured the bridge, and a small strong-point in Santo Domingo, the operation to divide the city fell apart. Loyalists cheered the paratroopers' arrival, picked up their equipment, and withdrew east across the bridge to San Isidro Airfield. This unexpected turn of events presented York a serious tactical problem -- his defensive line lacked a center. Instead of dividing rebel forces, the Loyalist retreat left the Americans separated.

Since military necessity required a continuous defensive line, York requested permission from the joint chiefs to close the gap. To his surprise, the answer was an emphatic no. Presidential advisors, particularly former Ambassador John B. Martin, feared another overt military move would jeopardize negotiations at the OAS where anti-American debates followed the division's unannounced arrival.<sup>10</sup> York experienced the first of many decisions that demonstrated how Johnson intended to use the Army. Although he wanted the rebellion ended quickly, military initiatives would be subordinated to diplomatic considerations. This point was reinforced again at the height of the build-up on the first day when, in response to an embassy

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<sup>9</sup>The proposed landing-zone was covered with tall grass and, although members of the American Military Assistance Advisory Group photographed it from a nearby road, they never walked the ground. Department of the Army, "Stability Operations Dominican Republic," pp. 90-91; Palmer speech, 11 Oct 66; Edward E. Mayer, "The Dominican Crisis -- 1965" student thesis (Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: U.S. Army War College, 8 Apr 66), p. 32.

<sup>10</sup>Yale H. Ferguson, "The Dominican Intervention of 1965: Recent Interpretations," International Organization 27 (Autumn 1973): 530.

request, General Wheeler ordered humanitarian supplies flown to the island ahead of scheduled combat troops.<sup>11</sup>

That same day, 30 April, General Wheeler responded to the president's order to get "the best General in the Pentagon" to Santo Domingo. That afternoon Wheeler named Lt. Gen. Bruce Palmer, Jr. Army ground force commander. (Chart 1) Before he arrived in the Dominican Republic at midnight, General Wheeler briefed Palmer on the absolute necessity to work hand-in-hand with Ambassador Bennett, and promised Palmer additional forces if he needed them to stop the rebellion.<sup>12</sup> After assuming overall command from General York, Palmer immediately requested permission to close the gap in his lines. Like York, Palmer was told that the operation would have to wait a few days while negotiations on an OAS-sponsored peacekeeping force continued in Washington.<sup>13</sup>

At the Pan American Union, debate was not going well for President Johnson. He had seriously underestimated Latin reaction to the unannounced arrival of the Army in the Dominican Republic. OAS delegates were furious and, beginning on the 30th, subjected the United States to endless condemnation. Violent anti-American demonstrations erupted in many capitals and anti-American newspaper articles outnumbered pro-American ten to

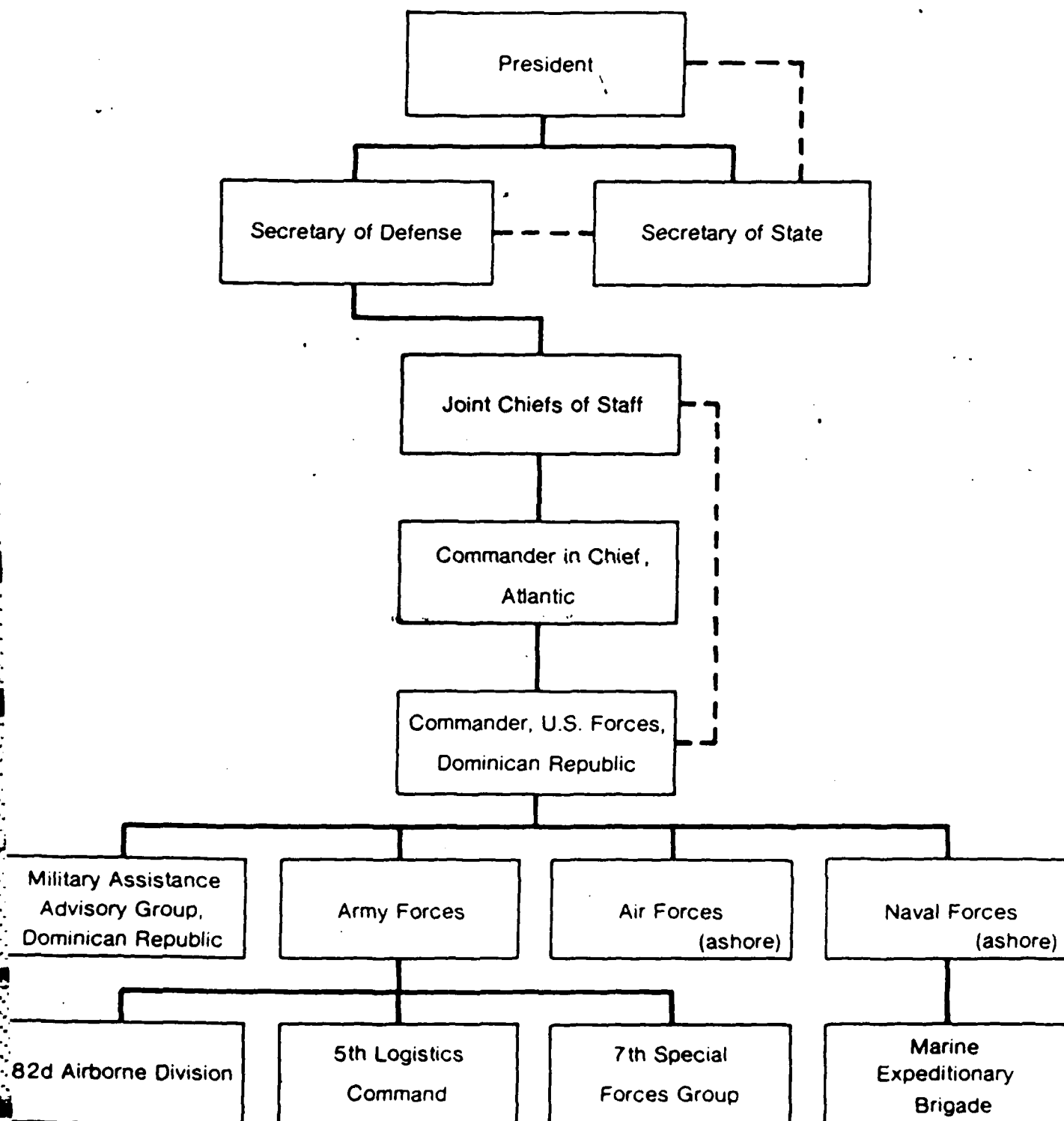
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<sup>11</sup>List of Assignments, U.S. State Dept, 1 May 65, NSC History, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Although it was never deployed to the island, the 101st Airborne Division at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, was placed on alert during the first week of the intervention by the JCS as backup for the 82d Airborne. Oral history, Gen. Bruce Palmer, Jr., Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.

<sup>13</sup>U.S. Forces, Dominican Republic, "Report of Stability Operations" (Santo Domingo: HQ, USFORDOMREP, 31 Aug 65), incl. 4 to ch. 4, p. 9.

Chart 1 - Command Relationship, U.S. Forces



Formal

Operational (de facto)



one.<sup>14</sup> Not only had Johnson violated the non-intervention clause of the OAS charter, he had done so without consulting the OAS. Johnson knew the OAS would not endorse his plan and therefore chose to seek its concurrence after the fact. As a result, Latin governments rightfully felt slighted and taken advantage of. Even those governments who supported the two Marine evacuations and understood Johnson's rationale for the intervention could not accept the manner in which he did it.

Few OAS representatives were convinced when Ambassador Bunker explained that the intervention had been unannounced because there was not enough time for consultation. Even fewer were impressed when President Johnson publicly compared the situation to "another Cuba" or when the American embassy in Santo Domingo released an ill-prepared list of Communist agents within the rebel movement.<sup>15</sup> It was in regard to Johnson's allegations of an imminent Communist threat where perceptions differed the most in the organization. This is not to say that the members were soft on Communism, they were not. Instead, they were more concerned with American military intervention. Despite these feelings, delegates saw the reality of the situation and turned their attention to finding a graceful way to reduce American military presence and to end the civil war.

On 2 May, after Ambassador Bunker reported to the president that progress was being made toward a regional peace-force,

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<sup>14</sup>Duty Log, State Dept, 6 May 65, NSC History.

<sup>15</sup>On CIA Director Raborn's order, the embassy released two lists to the press. The lists named fifty-eight Communists or Communist-supporters within the rebel movement. Unfortunately, the lists had been compiled hastily and were filled with errors that the press was quick to publicize. Five names were duplicated and several others were only loosely associated with any Communist movement or activity. Working paper, U.S. Embassy Santo Domingo, sub: Communists Identified as Working in Rebel Movement, in Bennett personal papers, box 4416 83D358.

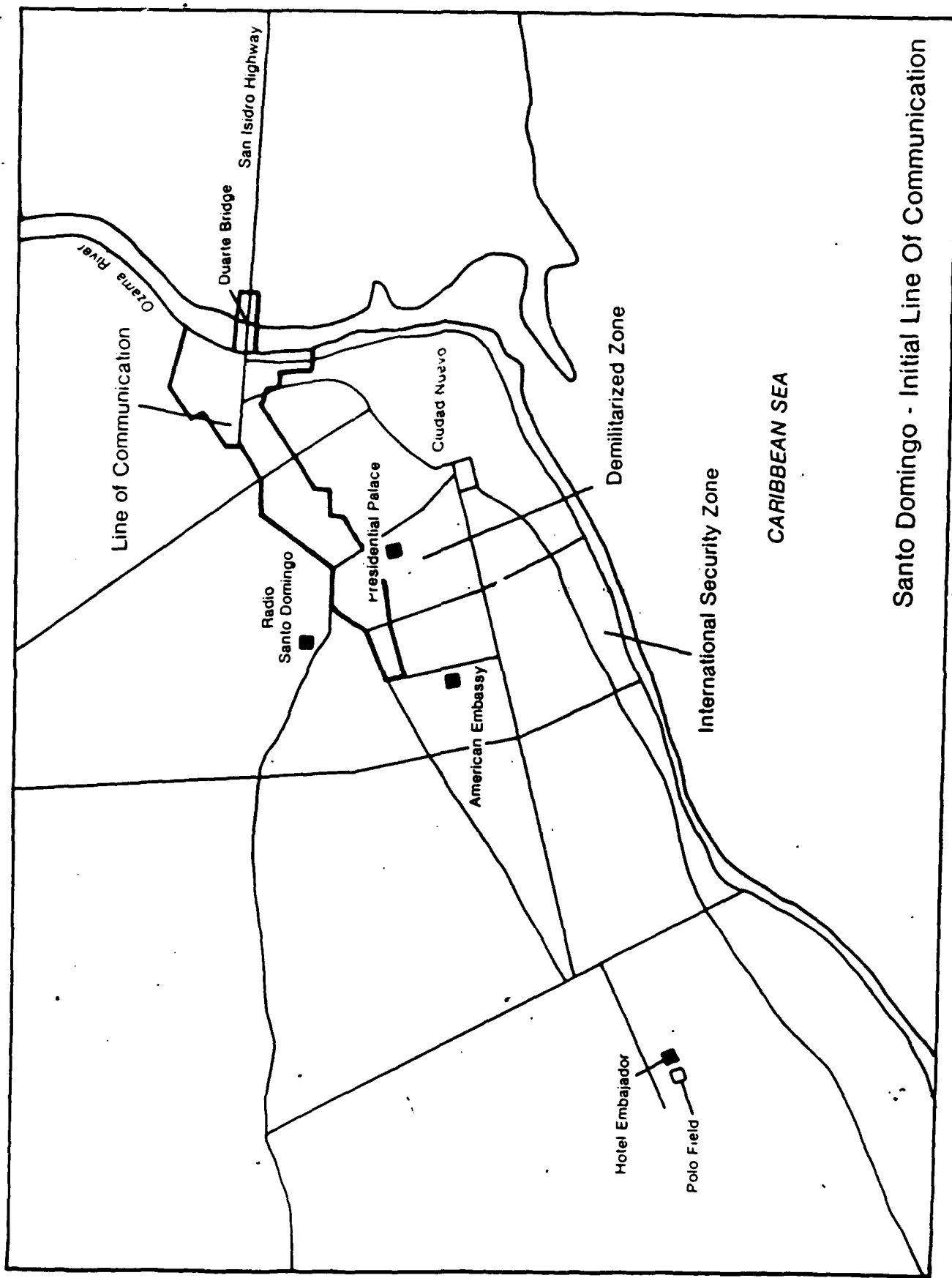
General Palmer received permission from Washington, and from an OAS committee in Santo Domingo, to close the gap in his lines. At one minute past midnight on the morning of 3 May, three infantry battalions advanced west from the Duarte Bridge and in only one hour and eleven minutes closed on the embassy compound without serious incident.<sup>14</sup> The division now secured a corridor that divided the city from east to west and isolated nearly 80 percent of the rebel force in the southeast portion of Santo Domingo, Ciudad Nuevo. The corridor, officially named the line of communication, was affectionately called the "All American Highway," and united Army and Marine forces. (Map 6) By separating the two Dominican factions, the line of communication enabled Palmer and his forces to adopt a more neutral position. As such, it started the second phase of the intervention--unilateral American peace-keeping.

In Washington, OAS delegates continued to question whether they should sponsor a regional force to assume peacekeeping duties in the Dominican Republic. Although such a plan had been suggested during other conflicts before 1965, national sensitivities about armed intervention had always prevented the organization from establishing one. Influenced by reports from its on-site commissions and Ambassador Bunker's offer to reduce U.S. forces and provide logistic support for Latin troops sent to replace them, the Council approved the formation of an inter-American peace force on 6 May.<sup>17</sup> This regional force would be made up from voluntary member contributions, would be under the control of the Meeting of Foreign Ministers (the organization's highest body), and would be commanded by a Latin general officer.

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<sup>14</sup>USFORDOMREP, "Report of Stability Operations," p. 9.

<sup>17</sup>Action Memo, White House for Bundy, 6 May 65, sub: Committee Meeting, Dominican Republic Task Force, NSC History, p. 2.



Santo Domingo - Initial Line Of Communication



General Palmer, the American force commander, would serve as the commander's deputy.<sup>19</sup> (Chart 2)

While the force was being assembled, Palmer strengthened positions in Santo Domingo and established a cadre headquarters for the OAS force.<sup>19</sup> By doing this he hoped to influence the structure of the peace force and maintain greater autonomy for U.S. forces (14,000 men in nine Army and three Marine battalions, and peaking at 21,900 men on 17 May) while at the same time placing them under formal OAS command, a situation he did not like. (Chart 3) When he expressed his apprehension to General Wheeler, he was told that, "We devised the IAF [inter-American force] concept for the purpose of giving an international cover to American military involvement in the Dominican Republic and to legitimize our activities in world opinion by identifying them with the OAS."<sup>20</sup>

As Palmer laid the administrative foundation for the Inter-American Peace Force, he also paved the way for diplomatic negotiations. He accomplished this sensitive task by refining the rules of engagement established for his force. With the line of communication separating Loyalists and rebels, Palmer stressed restraint and neutrality. The use of force in response to rebel attacks was limited to individual and light crew-served weapons, with specific permission required before troops could respond with recoilless rifles, bazookas, or artillery. In fact, after

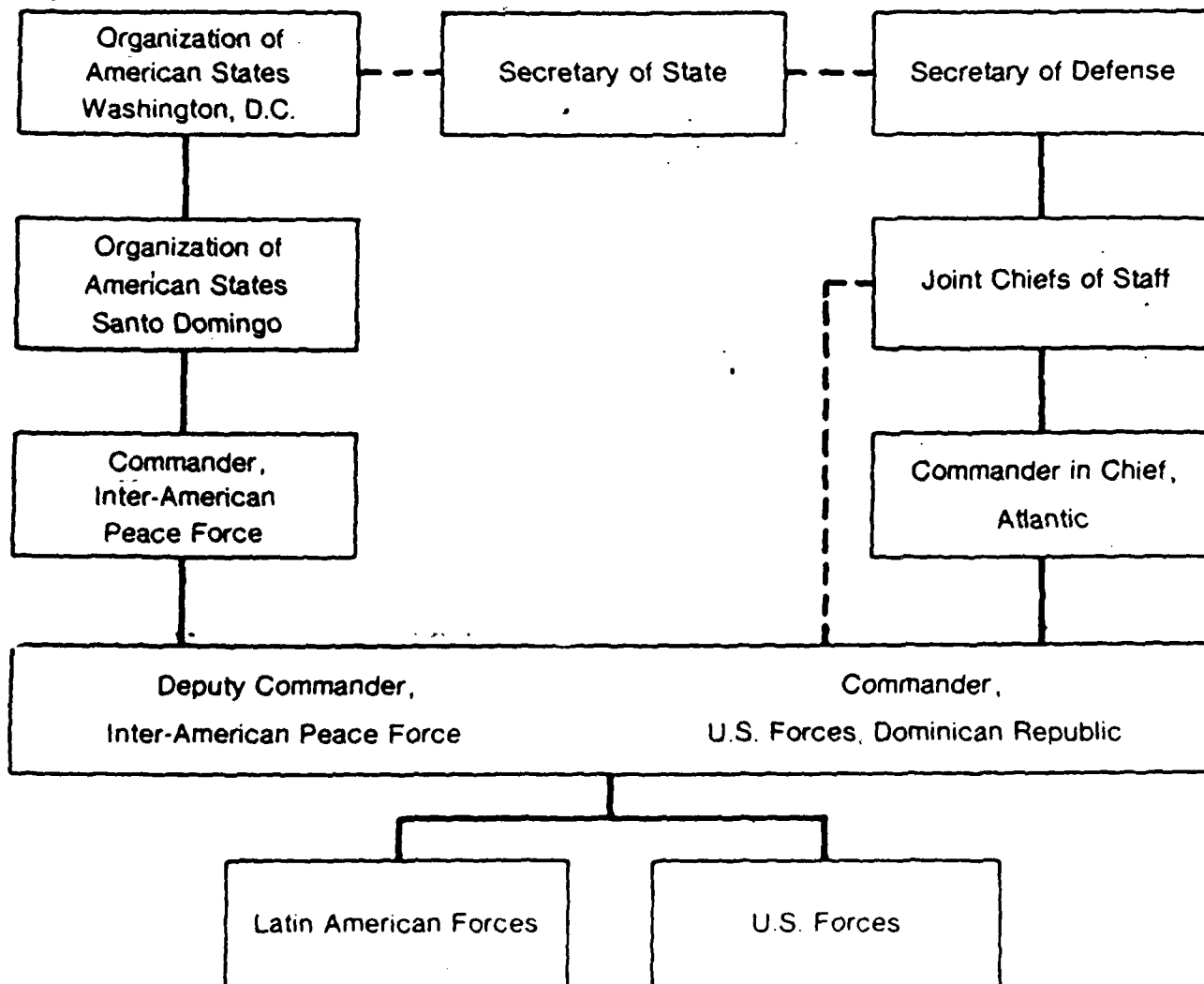
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<sup>19</sup>Resolution, OAS Tenth MFM, sub: Inter-American Force, doc. 39, rev. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Pan American Union, 6 May 65), pp. 1-2; Luis Iturralde Chinel, La O.E.A. y la Revolucion Dominicana (Washington, D.C.: Union Panamericana, 1967), p. 59.

<sup>19</sup>Oral History, Gen Bruce Palmer, Jr.

<sup>20</sup>Msg, CINCLANT to JCS, 271832Z May 65, and Msg, JCS 2997 to CINCLANT and USCOMDOMREP, 27 May 65, file: CJCS 091 Dominican Republic, Historical Records Division, Joint Secretariat, Washington, D.C.

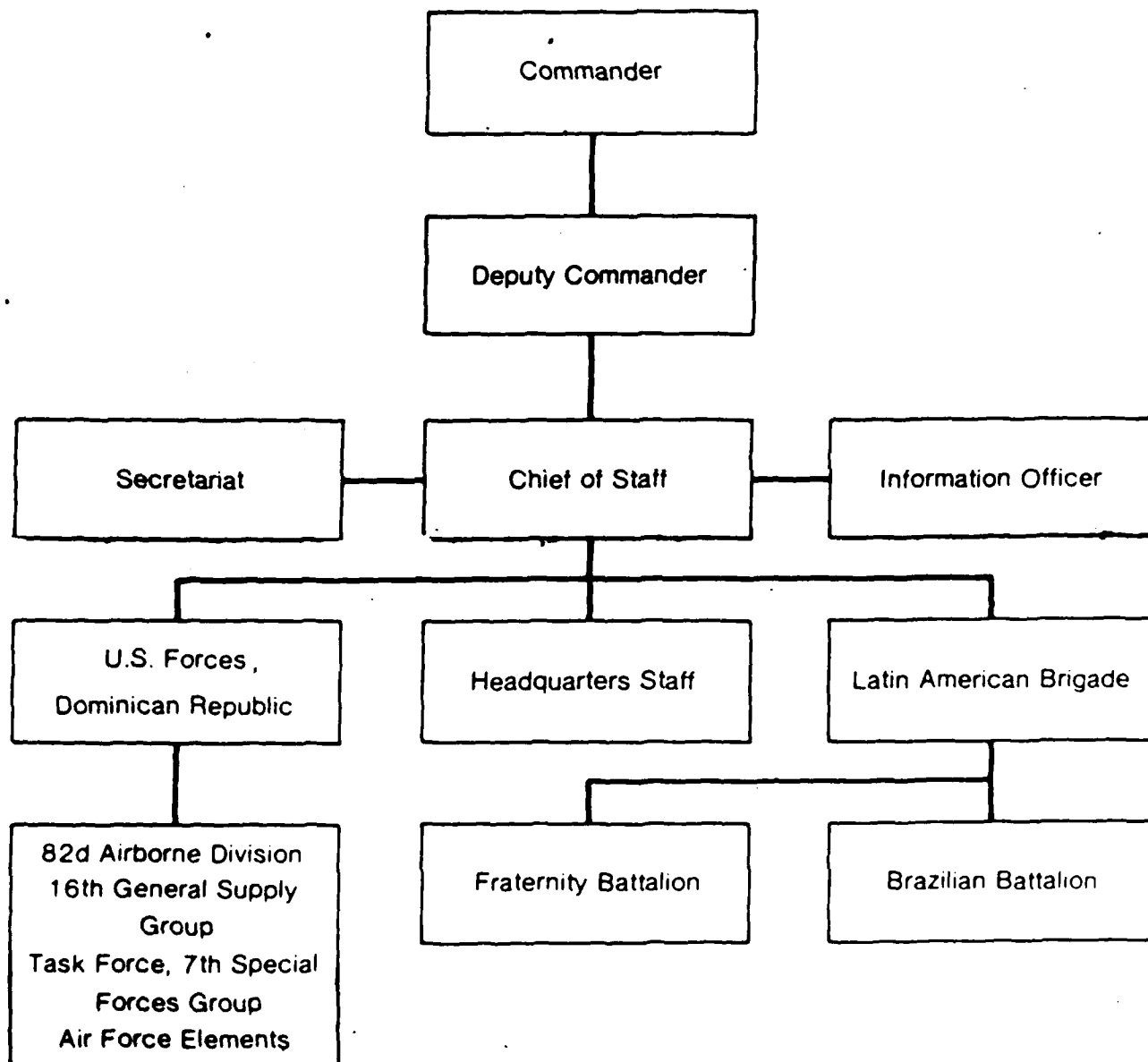
Chart 2 - Command Relationships, Inter-American Peace Force



———— Direct Operational Control  
 - - - - Coordination

Source: Department of the Army, Challenge. A Report by the Chief of Staff (Washington, D.C. Department of the Army, Jul 64 - Apr 68), p. 353

Chart 3 - Organization, Inter-American Peace Force



Source. Organization of American States, Fuerza Interamericana De Paz (Washington, D.C. Pan American Union,

American artillery fired eight illumination rounds on the first day of the intervention, it thereafter remained silent for fear of causing excessive damage and hurting the American peacekeeping mission.<sup>21</sup> Despite these restrictions, the division not only prevented armed rebels from leaving their stronghold in Ciudad Nuevo, it also prevented Loyalists from venturing into it.<sup>22</sup> (Map 7) This was a dramatic change from the initial situation when American troops actively supported the Loyalists.

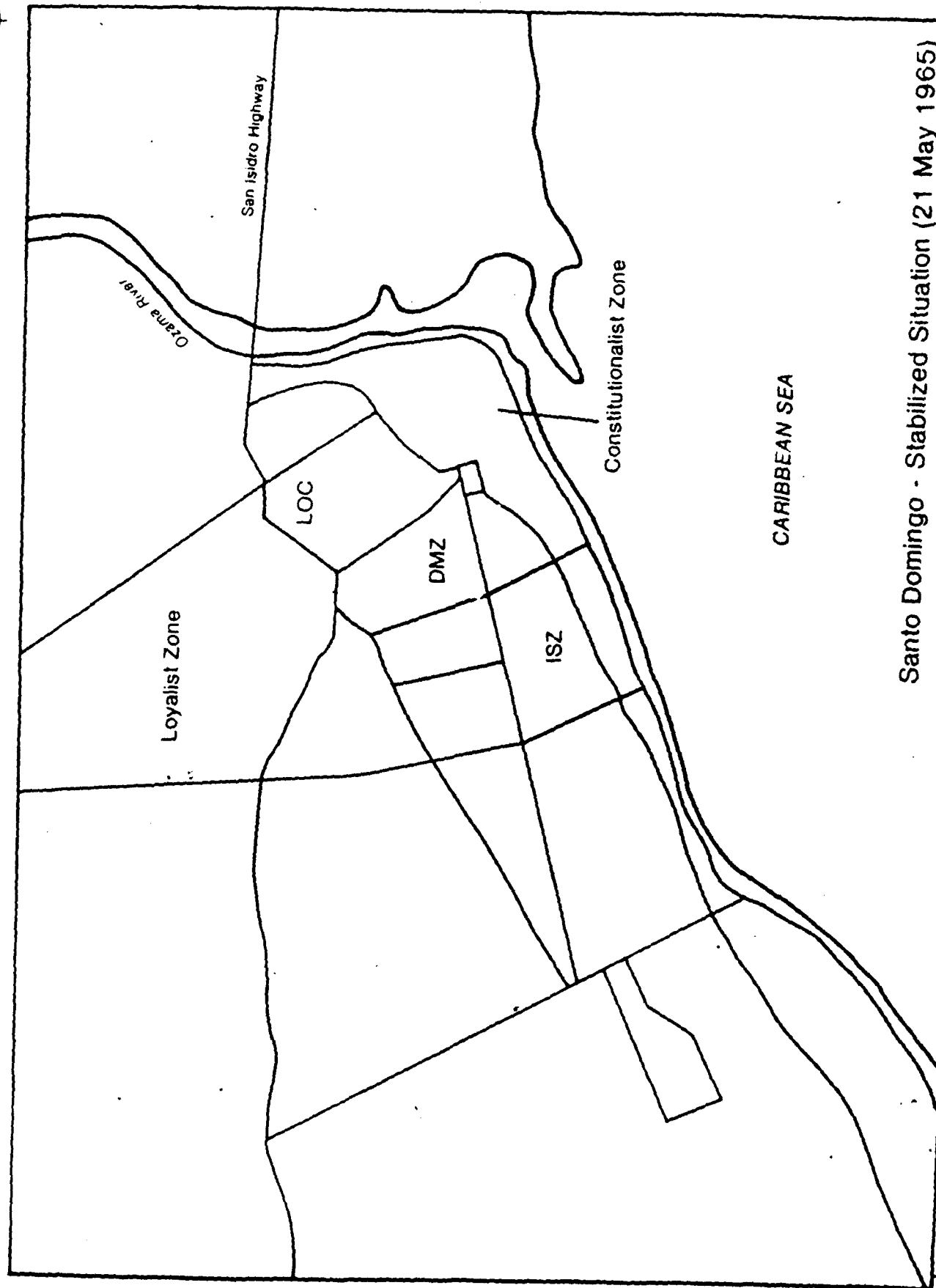
In just three weeks U.S. forces changed the complexion of the Dominican civil war. Overwhelming American military presence separated rebels from Loyalists, forced a military stalemate, and stopped the majority of the fighting. The Army had achieved the president's first and primary goal -- to prevent the possibility of another Castro-style regime in the Americas. Johnson also ensured that history would not remember him as the president who lost the Dominican Republic to Communism. But to accomplish this, the president paid a high cost. The unilateral intervention destroyed Latin trust in the post-war U.S. policy of military non-intervention in the hemisphere.<sup>23</sup> With a stable situation brought about by the controlled application of a

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<sup>21</sup>At times this proved frustrating for American soldiers subject to sniper attack. Soon after they entered the city, they discovered that the 57mm Light Anti-Tank Weapon (LAW), and both the 90mm and 106mm recoilless rifles were excellent anti-sniper weapons, although they did cause considerable damage in urban areas. One 106mm recoilless rifle crew also found a completely new application for the anti-tank weapon -- anti-ship. After receiving permission to return fire on a rebel gun boat that shelled their position with mortar fire, the 106mm crew sank the offender with a single round. Long, "The Dominican Crisis" p. 41.

<sup>22</sup>After the situation became stable, Palmer established more than ten checkpoints through which unarmed civilians and military personnel were allowed to pass. This not only soothed tensions in the city, it demonstrated American control and confidence. Palmer speech, 11 Oct 65.

<sup>23</sup>Lyndon B. Johnson, The Vantage Point (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), p. 198.



Santo Domingo - Stabilized Situation (21 May 1965)

Map 7





disciplined, restrained, and well led force, the president then turned his attention back to Southeast Asia. Concurrently, his advisors concentrated on soothing Latin feelings and finding a permanent, OAS-sponsored peace in Santo Domingo.

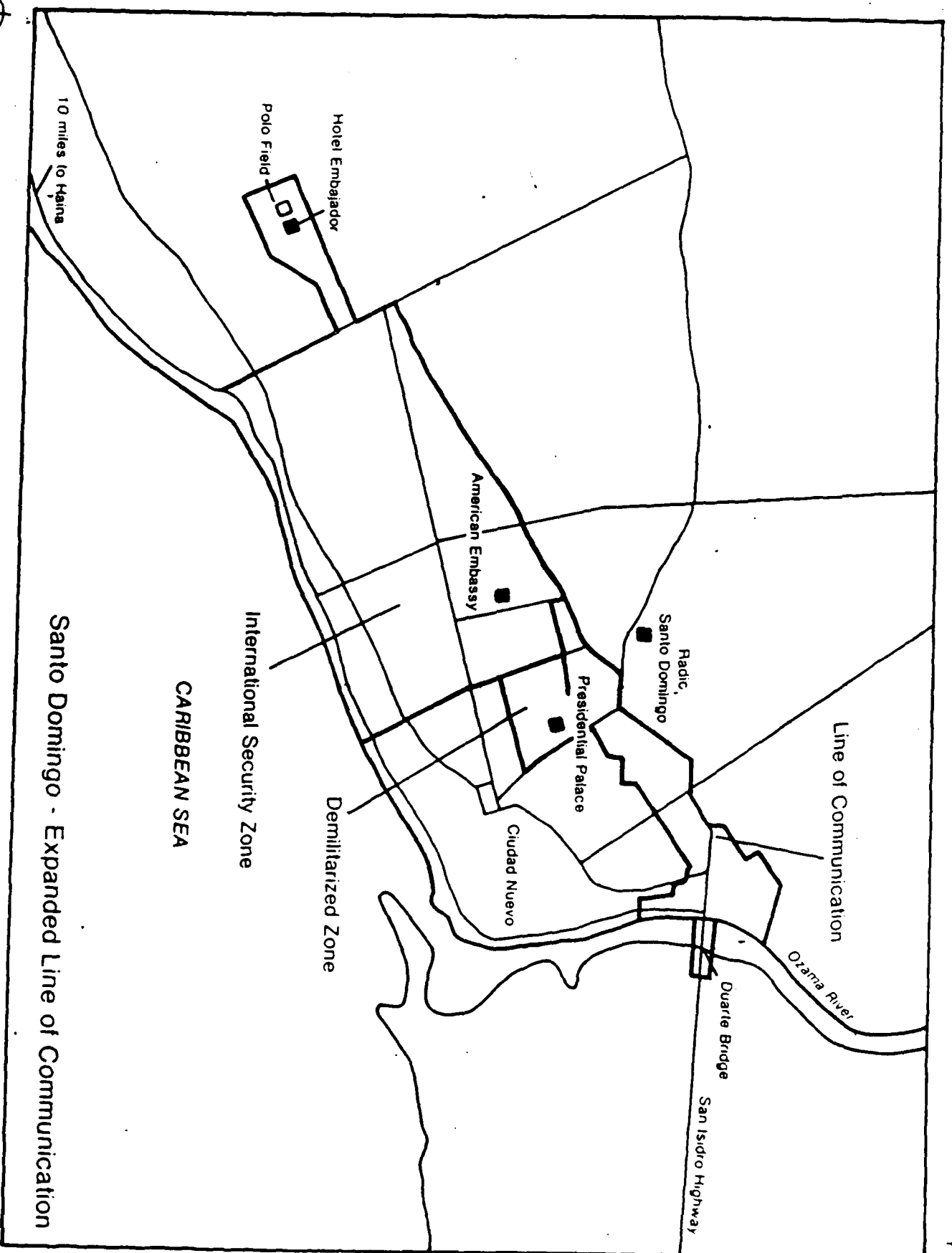
For the next four months, while American soldiers guaranteed relative quiet in Santo Domingo and pressured the Dominican factions toward the negotiating table, the OAS and its peace force began to play a more visible role. As military contingents from six Latin American nations joined the Inter-American Peace Force in mid-May, they augmented or replaced American troops along the line of communication and along the boundary of the international security zone and Ciudad Nuevo.<sup>24</sup> (Map 8) At full complement, the Inter-American Peace Force fielded 1,600 Latin soldiers and policemen from Brazil, Honduras, Paraguay, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Costa Rica. As the Latin soldiers arrived, American strength was reduced gradually until it stabilized at only 6,243 men.<sup>25</sup>

In mid-June, a major rebel offensive failed to breach the line of communications held jointly by U.S. and OAS troops. Convinced of OAS solidarity and determination, rebel leaders

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<sup>24</sup>USFORDOMREP, "Report of Stability Operations," p. 14.

<sup>25</sup>Brazil contributed the largest Latin contingent, an entire infantry battalion (1,130 men) and was the only Latin nation to provide its own logistic support. The other five Latin nations provided soldiers or police, but most arrived in the Dominican Republic with little else than what they were wearing. Not surprisingly, this placed additional demands on General Palmer, who was not overjoyed at their arrival. MFM Resolution, "Inter-American Force," p. 26; "Statement and Diplomatic Notes of Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker to Tenth Meeting of Consultation of Foreign Ministers of the American Republics," U.S. State Dept Bulletin 52 (7 Jun 65): 912.



Santo Domingo - Expanded Line of Communication

CARIBBEAN SEA

International Security Zone

Demilitarized Zone

American Embassy

Presidential Palace

Ciudad Nuevo

Hotel Embajador

Polo Field

Radio,  
Santo Domingo

Line of Communication

Ozama River

Duarte Bridge

San Isidro Highway

found their only hope for concessions lay in negotiation.<sup>26</sup> Shortly thereafter, both factions entered into serious talks to find an acceptable interim government until general elections could be held.

While diplomats negotiated, American peacekeeping forces divided their time between keeping the combatants separated and providing assistance to Dominican civilians. Across the island U.S. Army doctors treated more than 58,000 Dominicans before the last American soldier left the country in the fall of 1966.<sup>27</sup> Many OAS members, who for a variety of reasons had not offered military assistance, joined the humanitarian effort and provided food, clothing, medical supplies, and doctors.<sup>28</sup>

On 31 August, Constitutionalist and Loyalist representatives signed the OAS-proposed Acts of Reconciliation and Institutional Act. This agreement established an interim government under Hector Garcia-Godoy pending elections the following June. During the interim period, the Garcia-Godoy government worked to reunite

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<sup>26</sup>Although there had been several small and unorganized rebel attempts to force their way out of Ciudad Nuevo, the mid-June attempt was well orchestrated and a deliberate rebel military operation. Msg, AMEMBASSY Santo Domingo to SECSTATE 2422, 15 Jun 65, 2:15 P.M., in Bennett personal papers, box 4417 83D358; Chronology, U.S. Department of State, NSC.

<sup>27</sup>The last American to leave the Dominican Republic was Brig. Gen. Robert R. Linvill who replaced General Palmer as commander of American forces and IAPF's deputy commander in January 1966. Memo, Palmer to Bunker, 27 Nov 65, sub: Support for Provisional Government, in personal papers of Amb. Ellsworth Bunker, box 14384 67D291; Ltr, Garcia-Godoy to Comision de la OEA, 7 Jan 66, in Bunker personal papers, box 14383 67D291.

<sup>28</sup>Msg, Acting Director of OAS Secretariat Services in the Dominican Republic to Secretary General of the Organization, 18 Sep 65, file OEA, ser. F/II.10, doc. 270-463, at OAS Columbus Memorial Library; OAS Tenth MFM, "Second Report of the Special Committee of the Tenth Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs," doc. 81 (Washington, D.C.: Pan American Union, 2 Jun 65), pp. 17-20.

the Dominican armed forces, restore public utilities and services, and begin economic recovery.<sup>29</sup>

As the provisional government sought to return the island to normalcy, American forces entered a third and final phase of operations. This time, General Palmer shifted emphasis from neutrality to active support for the provisional government. Before the provisional government disbanded after elections in 1966, Garcia-Godoy requested Palmer's help several times to stop outbreaks of violence in Santo Domingo, Santiago, and Barahona.<sup>30</sup> American infantry were also used to stop an attempted coup by General Wessin y Wessin only six days after the provisional government was inaugurated.<sup>31</sup>

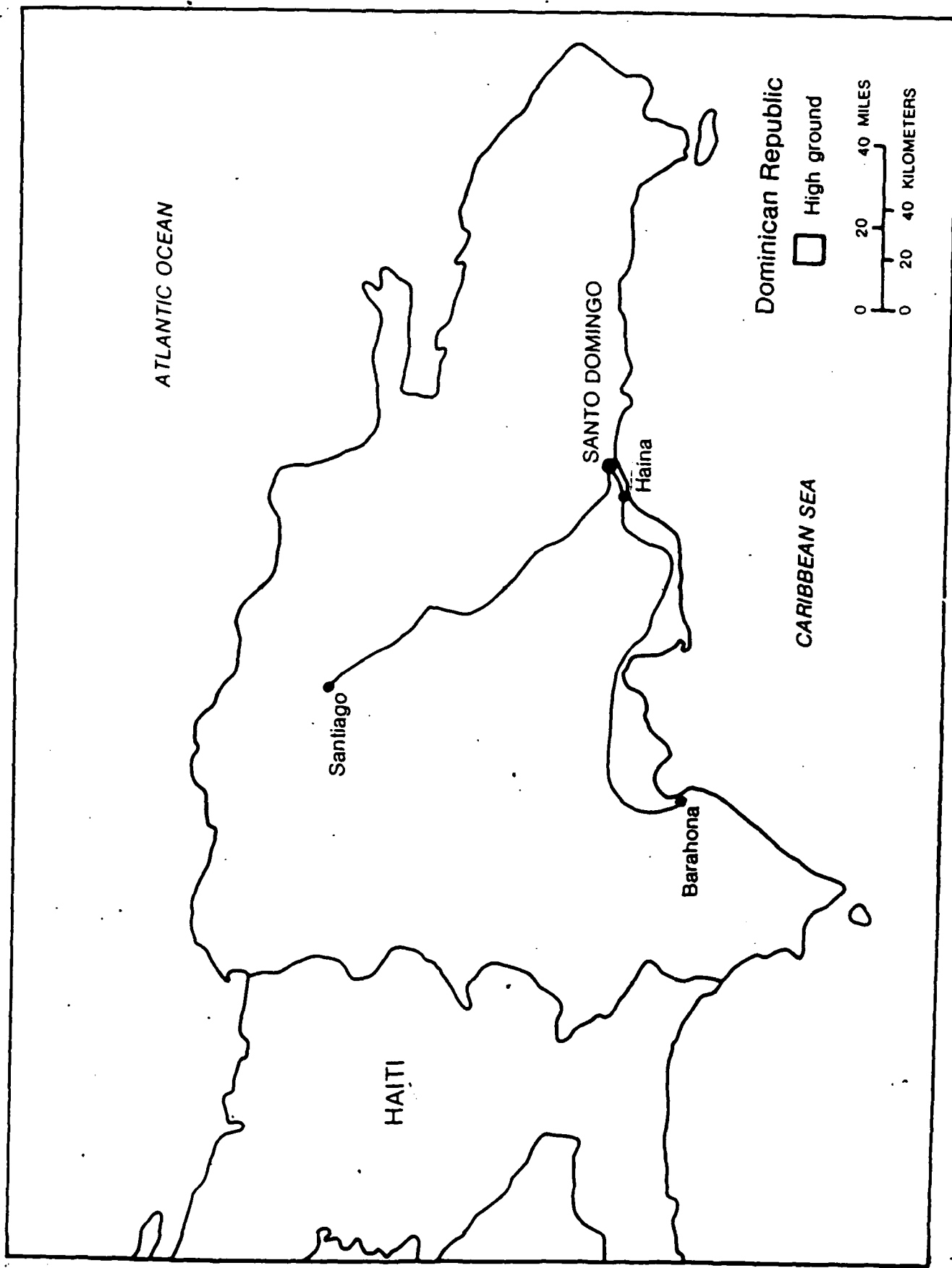
In June 1966, American military forces were called upon to support a final diplomatic objective. Augmenting three sets of

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<sup>29</sup>OAS Tenth MFM, "Act of Dominican Reconciliation and Institutional Act," doc. 363 (Washington, D.C.: Pan American Union, 7 Sep 65), in OAS Columbus Memorial Library, file OEA, ser. F/II.10, doc. 270-463.

<sup>30</sup>In both Santiago and Barahona, American forces inserted themselves between Loyalist and rebel factions and stopped the fighting through a show of strength and resolve. Palmer speech, 11 Oct 66; XVIII Airborne Corps, "Stability Operations Report," p. I-1.

<sup>31</sup>Following the attempted coup, General Wessin y Wessin was removed from the Dominican Army, named the Dominican Counsel General to the United States, and forcibly placed aboard a plane to Miami by two armed U.S. officers. At approximately the same time, the Constitutionalist military leader, Colonel Francisco Caamano was named the Dominican Military Attache to England and flown to London. In 1973, Colonel Caamano was killed while attempting to return to the island secretly with a small band of conspirators from Cuba. Palmer, oral history, p. 181; Memo of Daily Notes, Amb. Ellsworth Bunker, 21 Aug 65, in Bunker personal papers; Msg, AMEMBASSY London to State, 5 Apr 67, sub: Col. Caamano. in Bennett personal papers; Ltr, Chief of Dominican National Police to Representatives of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 15 Feb 66, in OAS Columbus Memorial Library, file OEA, ser. F/II.10, doc. 270-463; Bracey, Resolution of the Dominican Crisis, p. 33.



international observers, the paratroopers monitored the election process. Despite minor irregularities, the elections were generally honest and peaceful.<sup>32</sup> Joaquin Balaguer, representing political moderates, defeated Juan Bosch and won the presidency with more than 57 percent of the vote. Bosch, who according to General Palmer suffered from apparent cowardliness and a lack of machismo by remaining in exile during the civil war, captured only 40 percent of the 1.3 million ballots cast.<sup>33</sup>

On 24 June 1966, exactly sixteen months after the start of the rebellion, the OAS Meeting of Foreign Ministers called for the gradual withdrawal of the peace force. Three months later, on 27 September, the last American soldier left the Dominican Republic and the OAS deactivated its only-ever peace force.<sup>34</sup> The civil war had been stopped, but at a heavy cost. During the first weeks of fighting, several thousand Dominicans and 27 American servicemen were killed and another 172 were wounded. Although no Latin members of the inter-American force were killed during the sixteen-month deployment, 17 were wounded.<sup>35</sup> (Table 1)

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<sup>32</sup>OAS, "Report Presented by the Mission of Observers to the President of the Organization" (Washington, D.C.: Pan American Union, 2 Jun 66), in OAS Columbus Memorial Library, file OEA, ser. F/II.10, doc. 270-463; Memo, Bunker, 21 Jun 66, sub: members of Thomas Group, in Bunker personal papers, box 14383 67D291.

<sup>33</sup>Palmer oral history; Johnsrud, "Was Peace Victorious?" p. 15..

<sup>34</sup>OAS, "Resolution on the Withdrawal of the IAPF from the Territory of the Dominican Republic," doc. 461 (Washington, D.C.: Pan American Union, 27 Jun 66), and OAS Ad Hoc Committee, "Special Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Tenth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization of American States," 15 Sep 66, both in Bunker personal papers, box 14383 and 14384 67D291.

<sup>35</sup>Washington Center of Foreign Political Research, National Support of International Peacekeeping and Peace Observation Operations (Washington, D.C.: Johns Hopkins University, Feb 70), pp. 289-313.

Table 1 - Inter-American Peace Force Casualties:  
April 1965 - September 1966

|       | Killed in Action | Wounded in Action | Non-Combat Dead | Total |
|-------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------|
| U.S.  | 27               | 172               | 20              | 219   |
| Latin | 0                | 17                | 1               | 18    |
| Total | 27               | 189               | 21              | 237   |

Source: Washington Center of Foreign Political Research, National Support of International Peacekeeping and Peace.

Observation Operations (Washington, D.C.: Johns Hopkins University, Feb 70), pp. 289-313.

Although the analysis of any large military operation should consider more than military actions, the 1965 Dominican intervention requires it. In the political arena it produced wide-spread and long-lasting results. President Johnson's decision to reintroduced military intervention to American foreign policy damaged political relationships across the hemisphere. Within the Organization of American States, the unilateral intervention destroyed the gains made by Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy and Kennedy's Alliance for Progress. Once again the United States was viewed with caution and mistrust by Latin neighbors. Within the American government, Johnson's unannounced military action opened deep cleavages between the president and Congress on matters of foreign policy. Ideological debates spawned by the 1965 intervention continued long after the 82d Airborne Division returned to Fort Bragg, and eventually encompassed American involvement in the war in Vietnam.

While demonstrating little regard for Latin sensitivities or even the OAS charter, Johnson clearly sought Latin participation in negotiating a settlement to the civil war. Immediately after the Army stabilized the situation in Santo Domingo, the president down-played military action and sought diplomatic assistance from the OAS. To reach his objectives; prevent Communist expansion, protect lives, and calm a destabilizing situation in the hemisphere; Johnson employed the Army as a means to support diplomatic initiatives, not as a solution.

At each stage of the intervention, General Palmer was called upon to perform different missions, each tailored to support changing diplomatic initiatives. To accomplish this, Palmer modified his rules of engagement and relied on disciplined and well-led American soldiers to reduce tensions and to promote tranquility. By providing American diplomats with this type of flexible military support, General Palmer and the men of the 82d



Airborne Division stopped the bloodshed and helped promote a negotiated settlement in the Dominican Republic. In a speech delivered in the fall of 1966, Palmer summarized the situation: "The solution of the problems of a nation do not necessarily lie in the defeat of a specific political faction .... Thus, our military task in stability or national development operations may often be to control opposing factions and bring about an atmosphere of tranquility and stability."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Palmer speech, 26 Oct 66.

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